

A Lamentable Ballad of the LADY'S FALL.

To the Tune of, *In Pescod time, &c.*



Mark well my heavy doleful tale,
 you loyal lovers all
 And heedfully hear in your heart
 a gallant Lady's fall:
 Long was the word ere she was won,
 to lead a wedded life,
 But folly wrought her evert' now,
 before she was a wife.
 Too soon, alas, she gave consent
 to yield unto his will,
 Though he prote'ed to be true,
 and faithful to her still:
 She felt her body altered quite;
 her bright hue waxed pale,
 Her fair red cheeks turn'd colour white,
 her strength began to fail.
 So that with many a sorrowful sigh,
 this beauteous maiden mild,
 With tedious heart perceiv'd herself
 to be conceiv'd with child:
 She kept it from her father's sight,
 as close as close might be,
 And so put on her silken gown,
 none might her swelling see.
 Unto her lover secretly
 she hid herself away,
 And walking with him hand in hand,
 these words to him did say:
 Behold, said she, a maiden distressed,
 my love, brought to this pass,
 Behold I go with child by thee,
 but none thereof doth know.
 The little babe springs in my womb,
 to hear the father's voice,

Let it not be a bastard call'd,
 sith I made thee my choice:
 Come, come, my love, perforce in thy bed,
 and wed me out of hand,
 O leade me not in this extrem,
 in grief always to stand.
 Think on thy former promise made,
 thy vows and oaths each one,
 Remember with what bitter tears
 to me thou mad'st thy moan:
 Convey me to some secret place,
 and marry me with speed,
 O with thy rapier end my life,
 ere further shame proceed.
 Alas my dearest love, quoth he,
 my greatest joy on earth,
 Which way can I convey thee hence,
 without a sudden death?
 Thy friends they be of high degree,
 and I am mean estate,
 Full hard it is to get thee forth
 out of thy father's gate.
 Dread not thyself to save my fame,
 and if thou takest me,
 Myself will step between the swords,
 and take the harm on me:
 So shall I leave dishonour quite,
 if so I should be slain.
 What could she say, but that to elude,
 she took a horse on.
 And not fear any further harm,
 myself will so devise,
 That I will go away with thee,
 unseen of mortal eyes;



Disguised like some pitty page,
 I'll meet thee in the dark,
 And all alone I'll come to thee,
 hard by my father's park.
 And there, quoth he, I'll meet my love,
 if God do lend me life,
 And this day month without all fail,
 I will make thee my wife:
 Then with a sweet and loving kiss,
 they parted presently,
 And at their parting brinish tears,
 flood in each others eye.
 At length the wished day was come,
 whereby this lovely maid,
 with lovely eyes, and strange attyre,
 for her true lover said:
 When any person she espied,
 come riding o're the plain,
 she thought it was her own true love,
 but all her hopes were vain.
 Then did she weep and soze bewail
 her most unhappy fate,
 Then did she speak these woeful words,
 when succourless she sat:
 O false forsworn and faithless wretch,
 disloyal to thy love,
 hast thou forgot thy promise made,
 and wilt thou perjur'd prove?
 And hast thou now forsaken me,
 in this my great distress,
 To end my days in open shame,
 which thou might'st well redress:
 Was't worth the time I did believe,
 that flattering tongue of thine,
 Would'st God that I had never seen,
 the tears of thy false eye.
 And thus with many a sorrowful sigh,
 homewards she went again,
 No rest came in her watry eyes,
 she felt such bitter pain.
 In travell strong she felt that night,
 with many a bitter chide,
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What woeful pangs she felt that night,
 both each good woman know,
 she called up her waiting-maid,
 that lay at her bed's feet,
 who musing at her mistress's we,
 did first begin to weep:
 Weep not, said she, but shut the door,
 and windows round about,
 Let none bewail my wretched case,
 but keep all persons out.
 O spiers, call your mother dear,
 of women you have need,
 And of some skilful midwives too,
 the better you may speed:
 Call not my mother for thy life,
 nor call no women here,
 Tho' midwives help comes now too late,
 my death I do not fear.
 With that the babe sprang in her womb,
 no creature being nigh,
 And with a sigh that broke her heart,
 this gallant dame did dye:
 This lying little infant young,
 the mother being dead,
 Redgn'd his name a rectified breath,
 to him that had him made.
 Next morning came her lover true,
 affrighted at this news,
 And he for sorrow slew himself,
 whom each did well accuse:
 The mother with the new-born babe,
 were both laid in one grave,
 Their parents overcame with we,
 no joy at them could have.
 Take heed you dainty damozels all,
 of flattering words beware,
 And of the honour of your name,
 have you a special care:
 Too true, alas, this story is,
 as many one can tell,
 Wothers harms learn to be wise,
 and thou shalt do full well.

